DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 349 345 UD 028 650

TITLE The Power Hour of Homework Survey.
PUB DATE 91
NOTE 27p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Black Students; *Elementary School Students; Elementary Secondary Education; Guidelines; Hispanic Americans; *Homework; Parent Attitudes; *Parent Participation; Parent Role; Program Implementation; *Secondary School Students; Statistical Data; *Student Attitudes

ABSTRACT

This booklet describes the Power Hour of Homework program for elementary school through secondary school students, including tips on implementing the program at home (i.e., checking homework, talking to the teacher, determining the correct amount of homework time for individual students) and survey responses to questions from parents and students. The Power Hour is approximately 1 hour set aside at a definite time each day during which a student is encouraged to work in a quiet place with parents motivating students but not giving too much help. The booklet offers a self-test with questions for students and parents. Large percentages of parents say they are informed about and review their children's homework regularly. Most parents set aside a specific time for homework review, think that their children's homework load is fair, and feel schools can improve. Parents usually understand their children's homework assignments. Parents have many suggestions about improving homework habits, and students have many suggestions about making homework more interesting. Each day, most younger students spend 0-2 hours on homework, and most older students spend 1-3 hours on homework. Most students do homework at home. Most younger students get homework help from parents. Most older students get homework help from parents or friends. Most students think homework assignments are challenging and worthwhile. Teachers encourage parents and students to practice the booklet's tips for making the school experience more rewarding. (JB)

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FOR PARENTS, STUDENTS, & TEACHERS

POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK

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AMOCO POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK SURVEY

UD 025 650

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AMOCO

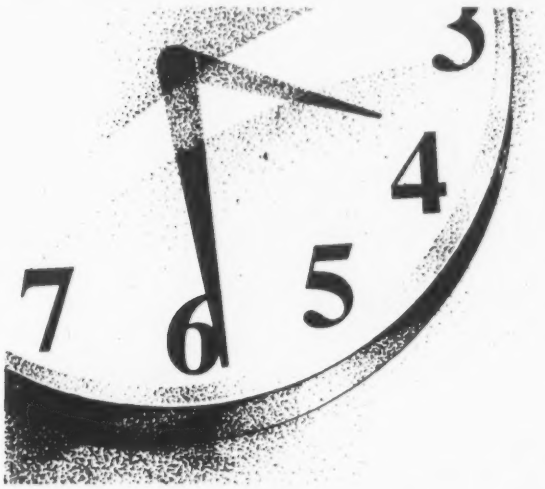
WHAT IS THE POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK?

The Power Hour is an exciting new way to look at the time a student spends at home building upon what's been learned in class. What happens at home is a key part of homework.

Students still get all of their values at home, including a love for learning. The single biggest influence on a child's ability to learn is active, individual parental involvement. Parents should know the homework policy of their child's teacher and make it clear they firmly support that policy at home.

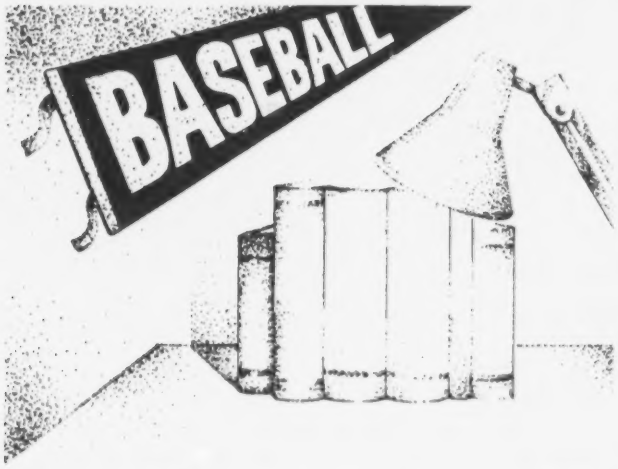
Power Hour tips for parents should include the following:

- **Set a definite time for homework each day.** Parents should decide which hours are homework hours — say 4-5 p.m. or 7-8 p.m. Then, students can pick which hour they want to make their "Power Hour."



WHAT IS THE POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK?

- **Set a definite place for homework at home.** A quiet, well- lighted place is best, with no TV, radio or other distractions.



Relieve children of other responsibilities. Don't expect students to do chores during their Power Hour.

"Help me do it myself." Parents should motivate but not give too much help. For example, show how one problem might be solved and then let your child work alone for a time before helping again. This builds self-confidence.

WHAT IS THE POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK?

- **Check homework after completion.** If the students' homework is beyond a parent's schooling, ask an older brother or sister or another relative to help. Review homework, praise good work, discuss mistakes, and ways to improve.

- **Talk to the teacher about homework.** Communicating with your child's teacher is a good way to know what is expected and how your child is doing. Encourage your children to talk to their teachers when help is needed.

- **The Power Hour isn't just an hour.** Each child is different, so individual needs will vary. Suggested minimum times for homework are:*

KINDERGARTEN	OCCASIONAL 15 MINUTE ASSIGNMENTS
GRADES 1-3	30 MINUTES
GRADES 4-6	45 MINUTES
GRADES 7-8	90 MINUTES
GRADES 9-12	150 MINUTES

*Source: Chicago Board of Education, 1988

THE POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK SURVEY

The Power Hour of Homework survey was developed to create awareness among students, parents, and teachers about the importance of homework. It was also designed to show what parents and students thought about homework, and how much time is spent doing homework.

Students and parents answering the survey questions attended five national conferences:

- **The National Council of La Raza**
- **The National Urban League**
- **The National Alliance of Business**
- **The U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**
- **The SER Jobs for Progress**

This booklet is dedicated to parents, students, and teachers who make "Power Hours" happen. Teachers may find this booklet helpful in discussing homework or study habits with parents, classrooms, or parent-teacher organizations.

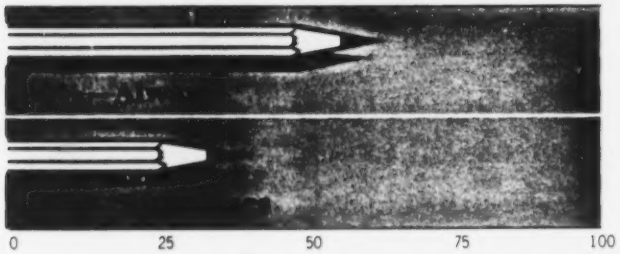
AMOCO CORPORATION'S
POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK SURVEY

PARENTS' RESPONSES

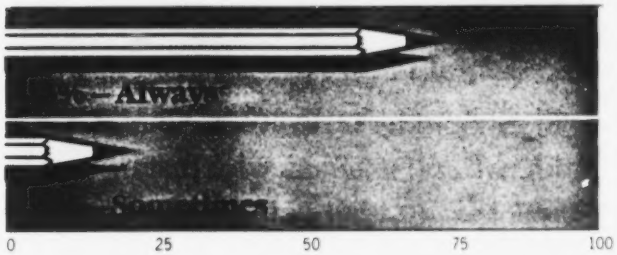
INVOLVEMENT

Large percentages of parents say they are informed about and review their children's homework regularly.

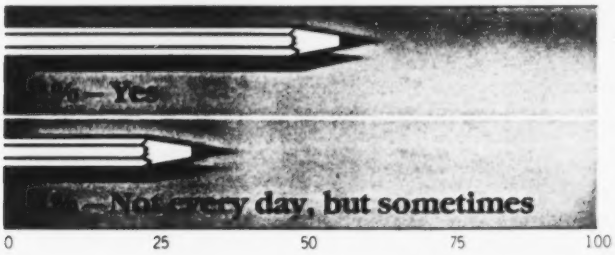
- **Are** you informed about your child's weekly homework assignments?



- **Do** you frequently talk to your child about his/her homework responsibilities?



- **Do** you request your child to show you his/her homework daily?



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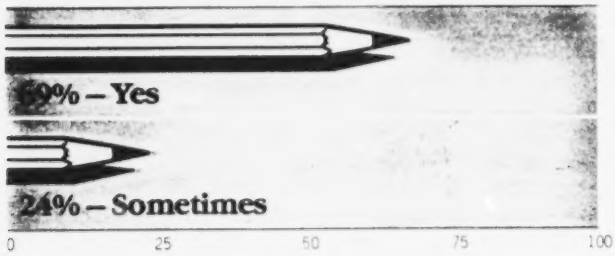
POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK SURVEY

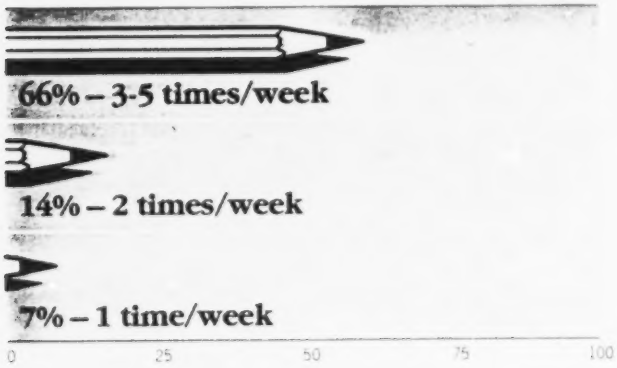
PARENTS' RESPONSES

Most parents also set aside a specific time for homework review.

- **D**o you have a certain time of day set aside specifically for homework review?



- **H**ow many times per week do you sit with your child and review his/her homework assignments?



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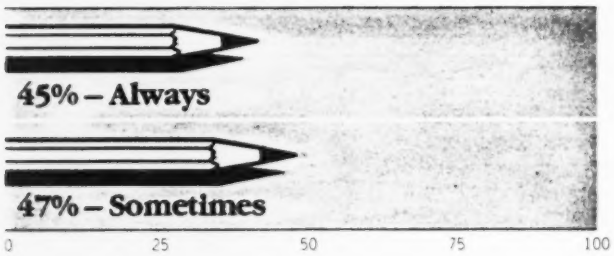
POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK SURVEY

PARENTS' RESPONSES

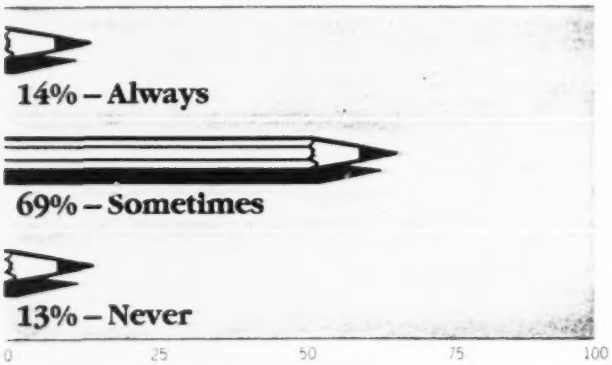
UNDERSTANDING

Parents usually understand their children's homework assignments.

- Are the subject matters easy for you to understand?



- Does your child have problems doing homework?



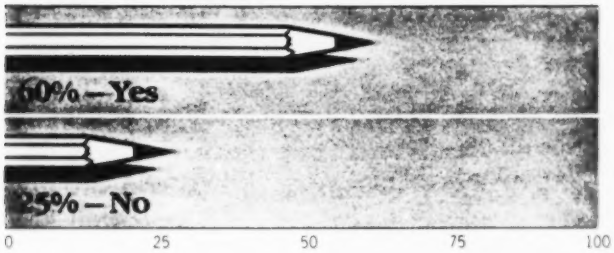
AMOCO CORPORATION'S
POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK SURVEY

PARENTS' RESPONSES

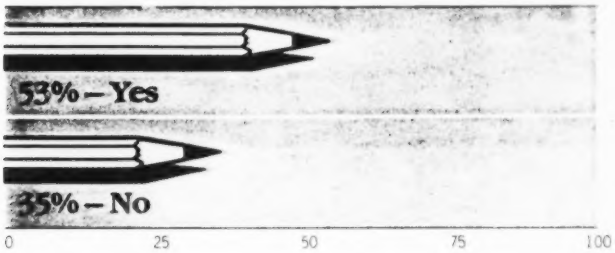
AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK

Most parents think their children's homework load is fair.

- **D**o you think your child does an adequate amount of homework for his/her grade level?



- **D**o you feel the teacher encourages extra homework?

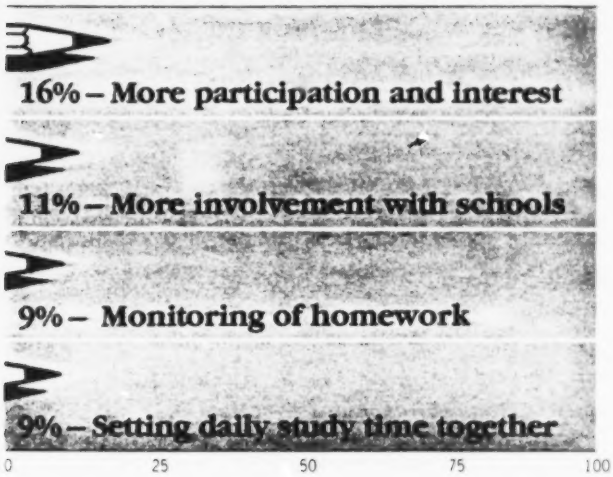


PARENTS' RESPONSES

IMPROVING HOMEWORK HABITS

Parents have many suggestions on improving homework habits

- What can parents do to help their child improve his/her homework habits?



OTHER RESPONSES

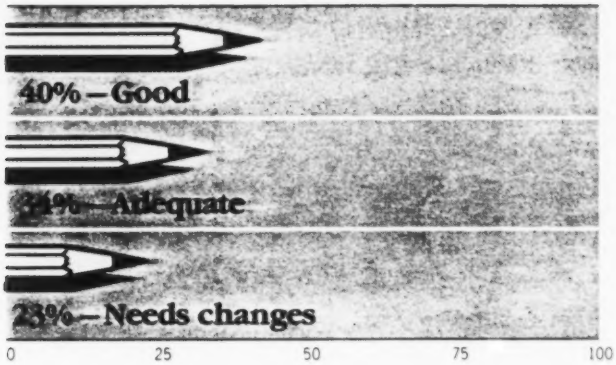
- More support, encouragement, and incentives
- Giving children more help and tutoring
- More communications between teacher-parent and teacher-child
- Less TV, radio, telephone, play time, etc.

PARENTS' RESPONSES

SCHOOL SYSTEM APPRAISAL

Most parents feel schools can improve.

How do you feel about the school system in your community?



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AMOCO CORPORATION'S
POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK SURVEY

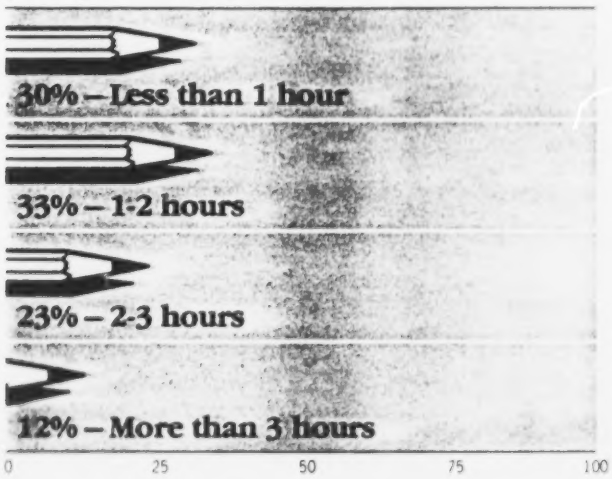
STUDENTS' RESPONSES

TIME SPENT ON HOMEWORK

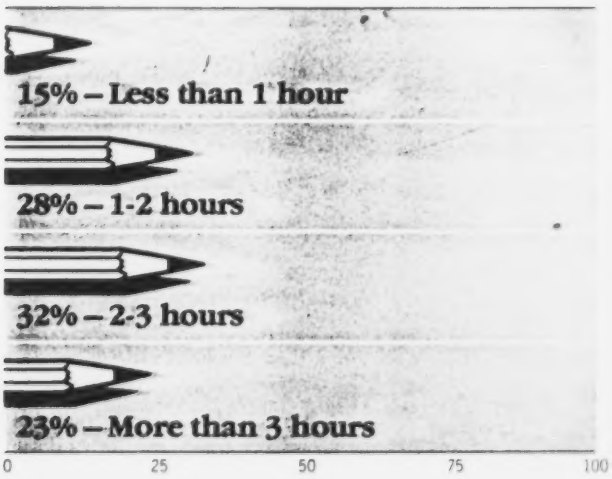
Most younger students spend 0-2 hours on homework. Most older students spend 1-3 hours on homework.

4-14 Years of Age

On average, how many hours per day do you spend doing homework?



15 Years of Age and Older



AMOCO CORPORATION'S
POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK SURVEY

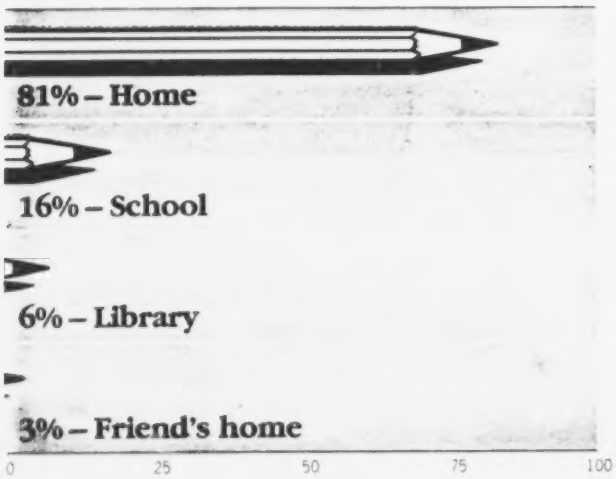
STUDENTS' RESPONSES

WHERE HOMEWORK IS DONE

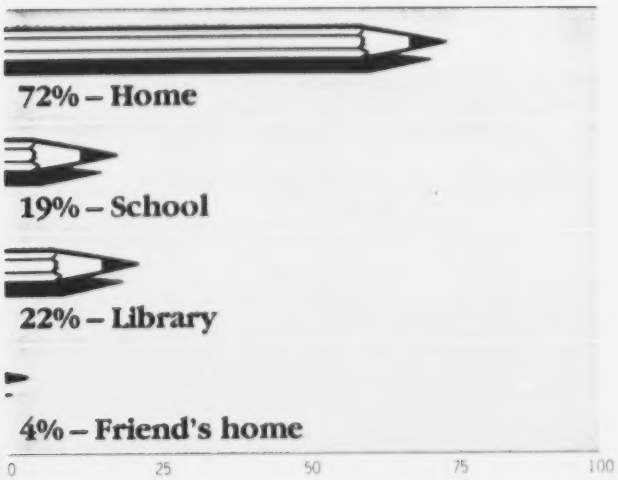
Most students do homework at home.

4-14 Years of Age

Where do you usually do your homework?



15 Years of Age and Older



AMOCO CORPORATION'S
POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK SURVEY

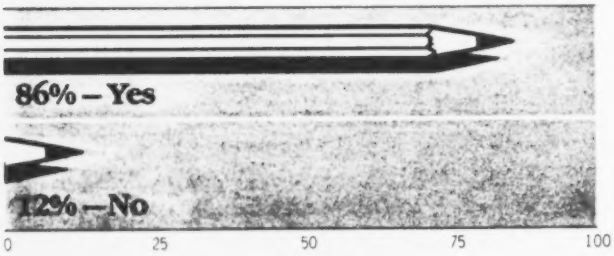
STUDENTS' RESPONSES

HELP WITH HOMEWORK

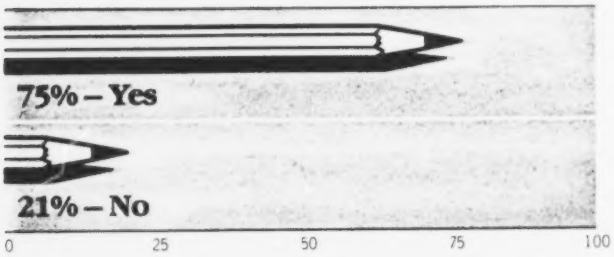
Students usually need help with homework.

4-14 Years of Age

Do you sometimes need help with your homework?



15 Years of Age and Older



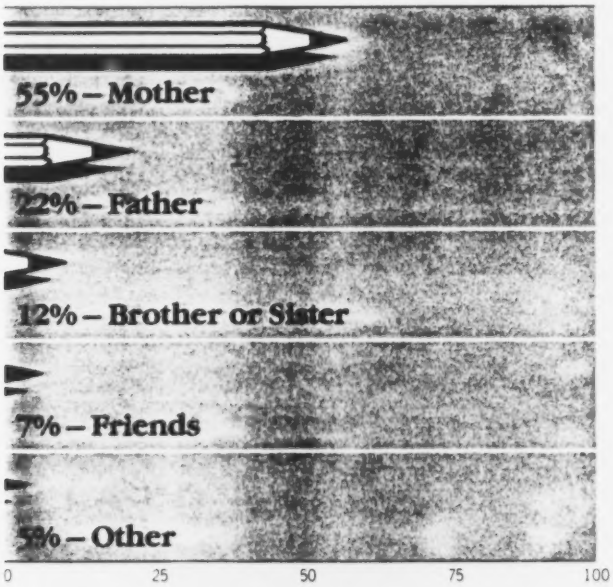
AMOCO CORPORATION'S
POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK SURVEY

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

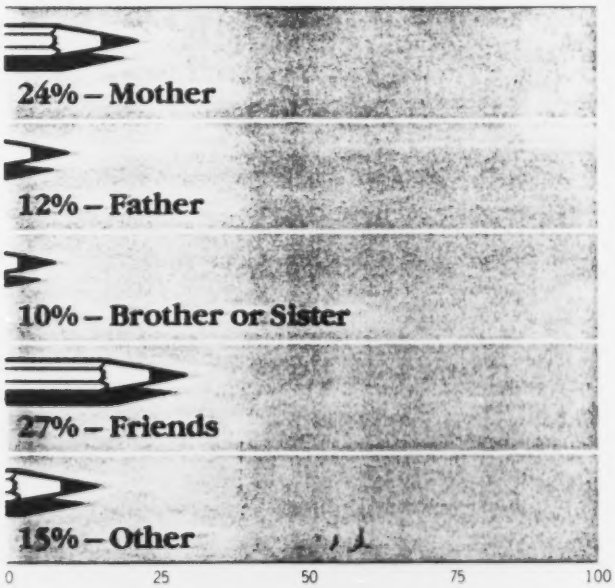
Most younger students receive homework help from parents. Most older students receive homework help from parents or friends.

4-14 Years of Age

If you sometimes need help with homework, who do you usually get help from?



15 Years of Age and Older



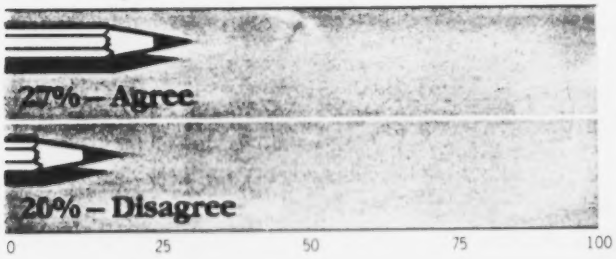
STUDENTS' RESPONSES

FEELINGS ABOUT HOMEWORK

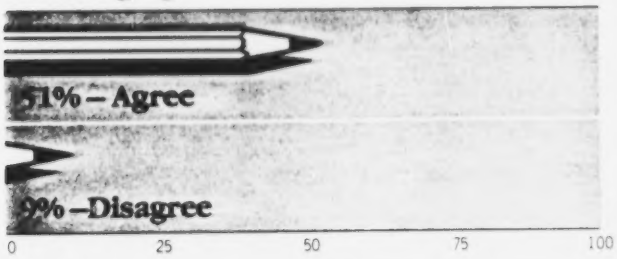
Students were asked how they felt about typical homework assignments. Most younger students thought homework assignments challenging.

4-14 Years of Age

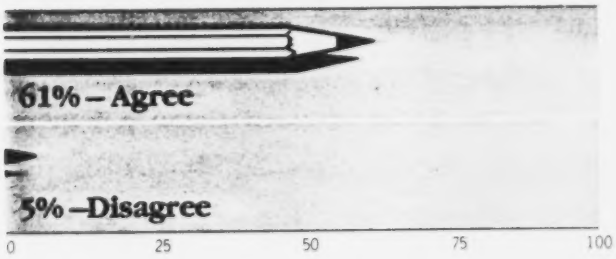
Too Easy



Challenging



Builds on what I learned in class

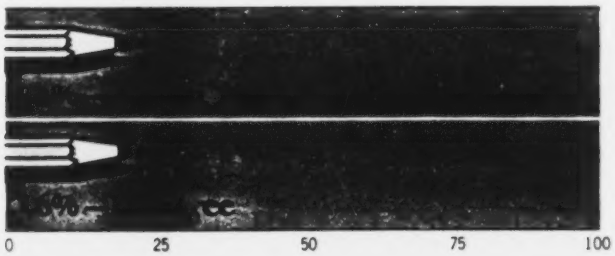


STUDENTS' RESPONSES

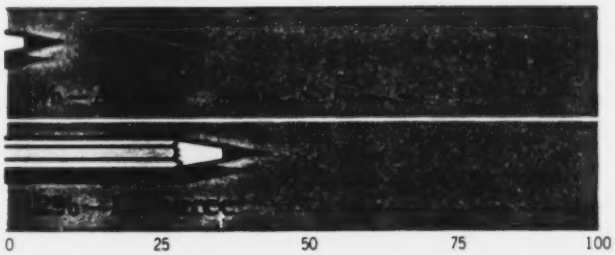
Younger students also felt that homework assignments were worthwhile.

4-14 Years of Age

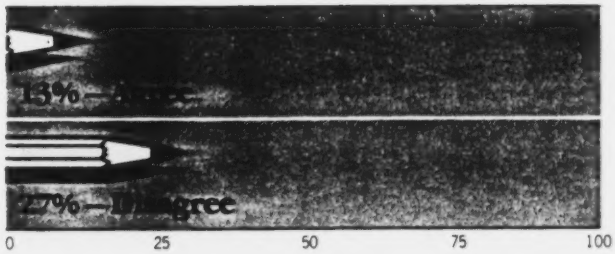
- Just busywork



- A waste of time



- Too hard



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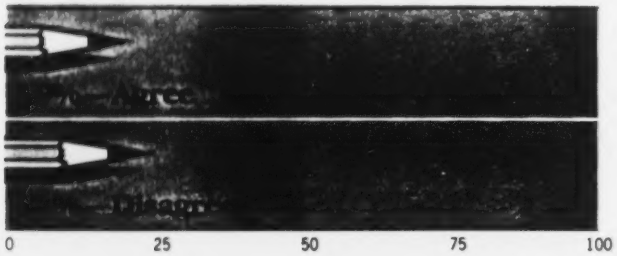
STUDENTS' RESPONSES

FEELINGS ABOUT HOMEWORK *(continued)*

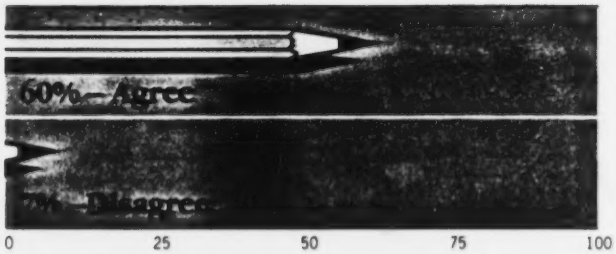
Older students also found homework challenging and that it built on what was learned in class.

15 Years of Age and Older

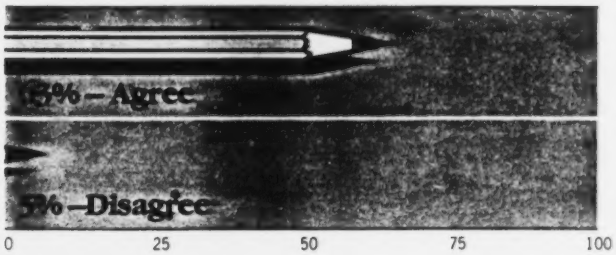
- Too Easy



- Challenging



- Builds on what I learned in class

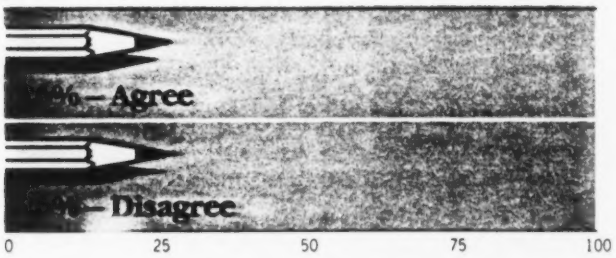


STUDENTS' RESPONSES

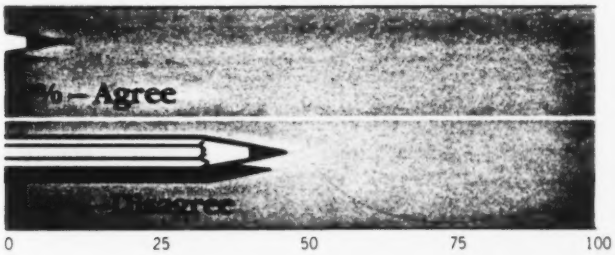
A large percentage of older students found homework worthwhile.

15 Years of Age and Older

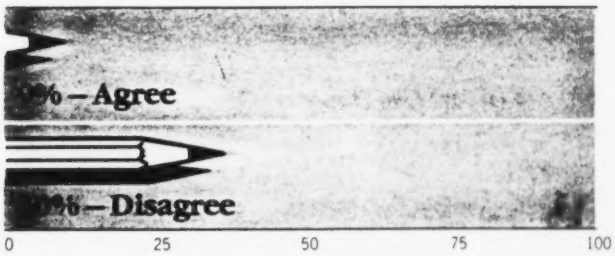
- Just busywork



- A waste of time



- Too hard

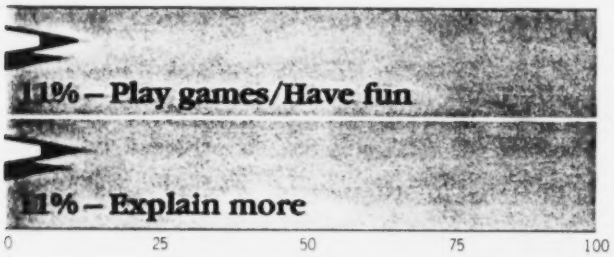


STUDENT'S RESPONSES

Both younger and older students have many suggestions to make homework more interesting.

4-14 Years of Age

- How can your teacher make homework more interesting for you?



OTHER ANSWERS:

- Give More Homework (5%)
- Make Homework More Challenging (4%)
- Not To Give Homework (4%)
- Give Less Homework (4%)
- Receive More Teacher Help (3%)

15 Years of Age and Older

- Explain Homework More (9%)
- Relate Homework to Real World (6%)
- Make Homework More Challenging (4%)
- Use More Group Projects (3%)
- Not to Give Homework (3%)

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Teachers encourage both parents and students to practice the following "tips" to make the school experience a more rewarding one for everyone.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Attend School Events
- Be a School Volunteer
- Provide Study Area
- Visit with Teachers
- Supervise Homework
- Thank the Teachers

TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- Listen and Learn
- Do your Homework
- Participate in Class
- Make Time for Homework
- Study with Parents
- Thank your Teachers

POWER HOUR OF HOMEWORK
PARENT'S SURVEY

SCORE YOURSELF

Now that you've seen how other students and parents answered the survey, why not answer the same questions yourself?

PARENTS' QUESTIONS

Are you informed about your child's weekly homework assignments?

ALWAYS **SOMETIMES** **NEVER**

Do you frequently talk to your child about his/her homework responsibilities?

YES **SOMETIMES** **NEVER**

Do you request your child to show you his/her homework daily?

YES **SOMETIMES** **NEVER**

Do you have a certain time of day set aside specifically for homework review?

YES **SOMETIMES** **NEVER**

How many times per week do you sit with your child and review his/her homework assignments?

3-5 TIMES/WEEK **2 TIMES/WEEK** **1 TIME/WEEK**

Are the subject matters easy for you to understand?

ALWAYS **SOMETIMES** **NEVER**

Does your child have problems doing homework?

ALWAYS **SOMETIMES** **NEVER**

SCORE YOURSELF

Compare your answers with those of other parents and students.

Do you think your child does an adequate amount of homework for his/her grade level?

YES **NO**

Do you feel the teacher encourages extra homework?

YES **NO**

What can parents do to help their child improve his/her homework habits?

_____

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How do you feel about the school system in your community?

GOOD **ADEQUATE** **NEEDS CHANGE**

STUDENTS' QUESTIONS

On average, how many hours per day do you spend each day doing homework?

Less than 1 hour **1-2 hours**
2-3 hours **More than 3 hours**

Where do you usually do your homework?

Home **School** **Library** **Friend's home**

Do you sometimes need help with your homework?

YES **NO**

If you sometimes need help with homework, who do you usually get help from?

MOTHER **FATHER** **BROTHER OR SISTER**
FRIENDS **SISTER** **OTHER**

For each word/phrase below, please circle the one that best describes how you feel about your typical homework assignment.

Too easy

AGREE **NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE** **DISAGREE**

Challenging

AGREE **NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE** **DISAGREE**

Builds on what I learn in class

AGREE **NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE** **DISAGREE**

SCORE YOURSELF

Just busywork

AGREE	**NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE**	**DISAGREE**

A waste of time

AGREE	**NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE**	**DISAGREE**

Too hard

AGREE	**NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE**	**DISAGREE**

How can your teacher make homework more interesting for you?

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AMOCO CORPORATION . A COMPANY THAT CARES

Amoco's commitment to promoting educational excellence in the nation's schools and universities stems from our belief that a highly educated and motivated work force is America's greatest asset. It is no exaggeration to say that the future of American industry depends on how well the nation prepares future generations to meet the challenges and complexities of the global marketplace.

To help foster the educational achievements and professional aspirations of young people, Amoco has for many years been a strong supporter of innovative programs that produce positive, long-term results from the elementary grades through the most advanced doctoral degree programs. Through the not-for-profit Amoco Foundation, Amoco contributes to numerous programs aimed at maintaining high standards of academic achievement at colleges and universities.

Recognizing that minorities will continue to play a greater role in the work place, Amoco makes a special effort to encourage minority students to take math and science courses that will prepare them to earn college degrees in science and engineering.

Turning young people on to the joys and rewards of education is just one facet of Amoco's commitment to the communities where we operate. We have high hopes for the next generation of managers, scientists, educators, and leaders. Most of all, we care about the future of America and that future rests in the hopes and aspirations of America's children.

For more information about Amoco's Power Hour campaign, contact:

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